A LETTER

To Mr. *G.*

Giving a True Account of a

Late Conference

At the *D.* of *P.*

Imprimatur,

Martii 12. 168⅘. *Guil. Needham.*

LONDON,

Printed for *H. Mortlock* at the *Phœnix* in Saint *Paul's* Church-yard. 1687.

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To Mr. G.

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At the *D.* of *P.*

SIR,

I Was very much surprised at the sight of several Copies you have given out of the Conference between us at my House in *January* last. For although you took great care in the Conference it self to keep me from expecting any great ingenuity from you after it; yet I could hardly believe you would have ventured so far as to have given out such false and imperfect Copies of what part as all those have been which came to my hands, and were all said to be dispersed by you. You know very well that the Gentleman who wrote for you never read his

Papers in the Concluſion, that we might judge how fairly he had repreſented both ſides: and when they were neither Read, nor Compared, nor Signed as they ought to have been, with what Ingenuity can theſe be diſperſed through ſo many hands for true and Authentick Copies? At leaſt you ought to have ſent them to me and to have anſwered my Objections againſt them before you had read them in *Coffee-houſes*, and made ſuch Deſcants upon them in places where you were ſure I would not be preſent to contradict you. But when nothing was done to make your Copy appear to be good, they muſt be of very eaſie faith and underſtanding who would take your word in this matter, without ſo much as any *Motives of Credibility*.

I hear you made great boaſts of your Victory after the Conference, which I onely ſmiled at, and thought you hoped to make your ſelf conſiderable by your Vanity. If you gain no greater Victories, you will very little increaſe the Number of your Converts: For the Gentleman for whoſe ſake the Conference was, declared immediately after it, *that he was much more confirmed in the Communion of our Church by it, and reſolved to continue in it*; which he hath ſince repeated ſeveral times to me. But of all the Perſons of your Church, I have yet met with, you had leaſt Reaſon to go away with the boaſt of a Victory.

For I pray call but to mind how the Conference ended, and I think you will be aſhamed of your boaſting. When you came to your Demonſtration of Infallibility in the Church of *Rome*, which came to this in ſhort, *That all Traditionary Chriſtians*

ſtians believe the ſame to day which they did yeſterday, and ſo up to the time of our Bleſſed Saviour and if they follow this Rule they can never err in faith, therefore are infallible; And you proved they could not innovate in Faith unleſs they did forget what they held the day before, or out of malice alter it; I thought the beſt way to ſhew the Vanity of this rare Demonſtration was to produce an Inſtance of ſuch as followed Tradition and yet you could not deny to have erred, and that was of the *Greek Church*, which went *upon Tradition from Father to Son*, as much as ever the *Roman* did: And I deſired to know of you whether the *Greek Church* notwithſtanding did not err in matters of Faith; And if it did, then a Church holding to Tradition was not infallible. Your anſwer was, *That the Greek Church followed Tradition, till the Arians left that Rule and took up a new one*, i. e. *Scripture privately interpreted.* I told you I did not mean the *Arians*, but the preſent *Greek Church* (which you charge with Hereſie) and yet they follow Tradition from Father to Son. This I was forced to repeat over and over, but no anſwer could I get from you, but you ſtill ran back to the *Arians*, and compared them and the *Calviniſts*, which I told you was not at all to the purpoſe; for I inſiſted upon the preſent *Greek Church*, and ſo you roſe up in a heat, and endeavoured to keep thoſe who wrote from ſetting down this laſt part as it ought to have been.

In the Papers diſperſed by you, you make me barely put the queſtion, *Whether the Greek Church did follow Tradition from Father to Son in matters of Faith, or no?* But do not mention the Inference I drew

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I drew from it, and which is ſet down in the Original Paper that was read aloud and approved by both parties, *That if the Greek Church followed Tradition*, which is undeniably true, and is granted by your ſelf in your Anſwer, *then a Church holding to Tradition as its Rule may err in matters of Faith*, which unavoidably overthrows your pretended Demonſtration. For you cannot make an evaſion, by ſaying, *That though the Greek Church once adhered to Tradition, yet in the Time of Arianiſm it left that Rule and took up another, and ſo ever ſince fell into errour as the Calviniſts did*; for that is apparently falſe as to the preſent *Greek Church* (of which I ſpake) as is known to every one that knows any thing of the *Greek Church*, which in all its differences with the *Roman Church* as to the *Proceſſion of the Holy Ghoſt*, *the Pope's Supremacy*, *Purgatory*, &c. ſtill pleaded Tradition and adhered to it. Neither is ſo much of your Anſwer true, as that even the *Arians went off from the Rule of Tradition*, for they inſiſted on it, and *Petavius* thinks they had good Reaſon for it. But however I ſaid my Inſtance was not about them, but the preſent *Greek Church*, and this I do affirm, you gave no Anſwer at all to.

I know what Arts have been uſed to get Mr. T. to approve your Copy: I have not ſeen what he wrote, and I deſired him to bring the Gentleman to me who wrote for you, that we might compare ours together, but word was left with my Servant, *that he was not well*. But ſuppoſe he ſhould now correct his Copy, this will be too late for my Vindication, ſince ſo many imperfect ones have been given out and diſperſed, not only here

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in Town, but over ſeveral parts of the Nation. And therefore I am forced to take this way to put a ſtop to ſuch diſingenuous proceeding. I hear Mr. *M.* pretends *that I gave out falſe Copies*, which is ſo far from being true, that I was often ſolicited on the account of your Papers, before I let one be ſeen, and then it was onely to correct the Errours of yours. And mine was taken by a Perſon of Learning as well as Integrity, who was preſent at the whole Conference and very well underſtood the whole matter. But becauſe your Writer's Copy was not then read, and none ſigned, I deſire you now to make good theſe two things, which the whole Conference depended upon.

(1.) That we have no *abſolute Certainty* as to the Rule of our Faith, *viz. the Scripture*; although we have a larger and firmer *Tradition* for it, *viz. the Conſent of all Chriſtian Churches*, than you can have for the Points of Faith in difference between us.

(2.) That the Tradition from Father to Son is an infallible conveyance of matters of Faith, notwithſtanding the *Greek Church* is charged by you with Errour, which adhered to Tradition.

If you give a ſatisfactory Account of theſe two things, you will acquit your ſelf much better than by boaſting in *Coffee-houſes*, and diſperſing ſuch Copies of Conferences. If you decline giving an Anſwer to this juſt and neceſſary Vindication of my ſelf, the World will eaſily ſee on whoſe ſide the Victory lay; but I confeſs I did not think it worth *boaſting of*.

If

If you are really such a man at *Controverſie*, as I hear you would be taken for, I offer you a fair opportunity to ſhew your ſelf: and I do promiſe by God's Aſſiſtance to return an Anſwer to you in ſuch a manner, as will be leaſt liable to the Injury of *Falſe Copiet.*

I am,

SIR,

March 7. 1684. *Your Humble Servant,*

E. S.

THE END.

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